



William Charles, Ltd.

August 31, 1999

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



473986

Bernard J. Schorle
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region V
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604

4920 Forest
Hills Road

Dear Bernie,

I thought it would be helpful to provide you with some local context for many of the comments at the public meeting last Wednesday. Unfortunately, the substance of the meeting was occasionally obscured by rhetoric that had more to do with such local issues as a mayoral election, the Southeast Rockford Groundwater Site settlement, prisons, and quarries rather than groundwater conditions at the Pagel's landfill.

Several of those in attendance at the Pagel's meeting were very active supporters of the opponent of the incumbent mayor in the most recent mayoral election. Our company has generally been a strong supporter of the mayor, and a former mayor is employed by our real estate division. One of the major issues in the close, vigorously contested mayoral campaign was the claim that the current administration had corrupt dealings with us and other companies in our group.

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Shortly after the mayoral campaign ended, the City of Rockford made a proposal to settle liability at the Southeast Rockford Groundwater Contamination Area Superfund Site. This proposal also became very controversial, and it became a re-run of the mayoral campaign. One of the claims made by opponents of the City's proposal was that Rockford Blacktop was secretly behind it and would derive some unspecific benefit from it. You may have even received calls about the proposal. Several of the individuals at your meeting were active in the opposition to the proposed settlement.

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Coincidentally, one of the individuals present at the Pagel's meeting is the current and past owner of the property in the Southeast Rockford Superfund Site known as "Area 7." Area 7 is the principal source of the groundwater contamination present in the Southeast Rockford Groundwater Contamination Area. As you may know, the agency and the IEPA have selected monitored natural attenuation as the groundwater remedy at that site.

Those present at your meeting also included the owners of a limestone quarry business which competes with Rockford Blacktop. On the eve of the mayoral election,

they filed a highly publicized lawsuit alleging that the City had violated various laws in purchasing stone products from Rockford Blacktop. Although this claim received significant publicity in the last few days of the mayoral campaign, no action has been taken in the two years since the election to pursue this lawsuit further.

Another local controversy which has somehow been linked to Pagel's landfill remedial actions is the proposed prison. In response to a request from the State of Illinois, Winnebago County and several other local communities have submitted sites for a new state prison for women. The site submitted by Winnebago County is approximately one mile east of Pagel's landfill. A group of property owners opposed to a prison at that location has been very active in three public meetings, the last of which was held a few days prior to your meeting. Many of the same people also attended the Pagel's meeting.

Finally, NRG Technologies was recently involved in a public controversy regarding the land application of sludge at a farm a few miles west of the landfill. A few of the individuals who were actively opposed to land application at this location were at the recent Pagel's meeting. In fact, several of the questions and comments at the meeting involved NRG Technologies land application practices rather than Pagel's Landfill.

I realize that this information has no direct bearing on the selection of appropriate remedial measures at Pagel's Landfill. Nonetheless, I thought it would be helpful for you to have the context for some of the comments made last Wednesday.

Very truly yours,



John Holmstrom III

JH/cap